

Appln No. 09/939,196
Reply to Office action of 1/21/04

REMARKS

This is in response to the Examiner's communication mailed January 21, 2004, which included a final rejection of certain claims, and the Advisory Action mailed February 27, 2004.

Entry of this amendment on an "after final" basis is in order because a) the amendment does not raise any new issues that would require further searching or consideration and b) the amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended to correct a minor typographical error.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 1, 4-7, 11, 13-17, 21-29, 33-36, 40-43 and 46-58.

Independent claim 8 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowed claim 13, which has been canceled. Allowed claim 22 has been written in independent form. Independent claims 30 and 44 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowed claims 33 and 46, respectively, both of which have been canceled. Each of these amendments is fully supported by the present specification.

Claims 8, 10, 12, 30, 32, 44 and 45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Martin, Jr. et al. Applicant traverses this rejection as it pertains to the present claims.

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As noted above, independent claims 8, 30 and 44 have been amended to include subject matter from allowed claims 13, 33 and 46, respectively.

In view of the above, applicant submits that independent claims 8, 30 and 44 and dependent claims 10, 12, 32 and 44 are not anticipated by and are unobvious from and patentable over Martin, Jr. et al under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103.

In conclusion, applicant has shown that the present claims are not anticipated by and are unobvious from and patentable over the prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103. Therefore, applicant submits that all the present claims, that is claims 1, 4-8, 10-12, 14-17, 21-30, 32, 34-36, 40-45 and 47-58, are allowed or allowable over the prior art, and respectively requests that the Examiner pass the above-identified application to issuance at an early date. Should any matters remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to call (collect) applicant's attorney at the telephone number given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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